AN EXAMPLE FROM MEDICAL WOMEN

The Common Cause

OF HUMANITY.

The Organ of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

LAW-ABIDING.] ***Societies and Branches in the Union 561.*** [NON-PARTY

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[The National Union does not hold itself responsible for opinions expressed in signed articles.]

Notes and News.

Food Queues.

It is good news that Lord Rhondda is taking steps to stop food queues. With this object in view he has given powers to local food committees to control supplies of margarine in their areas, and arrange for equitable distribution to the shops. It is expected that retailers will be forbidden to sell butter and margarine, and possibly other foodstuffs, to any but customers registered with them, and that consumers will be forbidden to register at more than one shop. Meantime, at the time of going to press, the queues still go on. *The Times* of December 22nd gives a vivid description of one near Ludgate Circus, which was six deep and nearly a hundred yards long, and had to be regulated by seven police-constables. A passage from *The Times* is an interesting confirmation of what we said in our leader last week. We read that "*Very few men could afford the time to stand in so long a queue, and the majority of those who waited were women and children.* Early in the afternoon hundreds of small boys and girls were wedged in among the women, and some of the little ones were pitifully young for their errand. Girls of elementary school age were actually carrying babies in their arms. A good many of the margarine hunters had come from the south of the River, and not one in a hundred had a home in the neighbourhood." "The men could not afford the time," but could the women afford it? Is their time not of equal value? And can we, any of us, afford that little girls should come from long distances carrying babies, to stand for hours in the raw cold, waiting for the necessities of life?

It is not likely that the queues will go on; almost the whole Press has now taken up the agitation against them. (One of the best articles is in *The New Statesman* for December 22nd.) But in the meantime an enormous amount of valuable time belonging to working mothers will have been squandered, and a good deal of harm may have been done to a certain number of children. One cannot but regret the waste.

Communal Kitchens.

"Lens" has an extremely interesting article in *The New Statesman* of December 22nd, on "Communal Kitchens and the Birth-rate." He points out that our present housing accommodation is "inimical to the birth-rate," and that the time has come when we ought to consider the propriety of building houses where there is room for children, and which women may thus turn into homes for the young future." Yet the discussions that have up till now been held on this subject seem to take it for granted that the old features will be perpetuated. "Things are to be better, airier, cleaner, less unpleasant to look at, but nothing resembling a change of type is contemplated. According to some authorities, women are to be called in at the last, when all essentials have been decided, in order to state their views on cupboards, larders, and so forth. In short, the women's problem for housing is that—if it is anything—is to be solved by men."

"Lens" thinks that if the women were given the proper share in deciding the housing and living accommodation of the future, one of the first things they would insist on would be communal kitchens. Besides meaning economy of food, fuel, transport, and labour, communal kitchens mean "hot meals on her return home for the woman who works outside as well as within it, and hot meals for the children without prejudice to the mother's work. Let us ask ourselves what proportion of the average working woman's energy is spent upon the purchase, carriage, cooking of food, and we soon discover that hosts of women would be released from something scarcely less than slavery if they could be relieved of the greater part of these duties. The Communal Kitchen would do so. It is a war measure; but, like a great many other war measures, it would, and will be, of no less urgent value as a peace measure." "Lens" goes on to point out that the Communal Kitchen would do for the working woman very much what has been done for a certain number of middle-class women by the building of restaurant flats. He thinks that "women would pronounce for the next move not in units, but in millions. Before we decide upon the type of 300,000 houses we propose to build as soon as possible, let us call in the women in the first place and ask them not, "Do you want cupboards?" which, of course, they do, but 'Do you want kitchens?' which, for the most part, directly they know what we mean, of course they do not." (Individual kitchens, that is.) "Lens" concludes his most interesting article by hoping that "women may come into their own," just in time to make possible the very substantial piece of social reconstruction or evolution which, he submits, is embodied in his proposal. We echo the hope.

Accomplishment.

Commenting on Mrs. Garrett Anderson's pioneer work, "Wayfarer" in *The Nation* says: "What Mrs. Anderson did for women's entry into the professions her sister did for their path to politics. To-day, the double warfare is accomplished." Not quite "accomplished" we think, but on its way to accomplishment. The fruits of Mrs. Garrett Anderson's labours for medical women are already being garnered. Mrs. Fawcett's work will, we believe, bear a still richer harvest, but only its first fruits have yet ripened.

Sidelights on Irish Suffrage.

V.—INFANT MORTALITY.

The tale of infant mortality in Ireland has been often told. Let us summarise the facts. Speaking broadly, one baby out of every eleven born in Ireland in 1914 died within the year of its birth. In 1916 the figures show a decrease, giving the lowest rate recorded, 83 per thousand. But the rate in the urban districts in 1915 was 120 per thousand. For example, Dublin had 153 deaths per thousand, Belfast 113, and Waterford 133. In the country districts the death-rate was 67 per thousand, and has rapidly decreased, as, for instance, in Tralee, where the death-rate has dropped from 97 per thousand in 1911 to 47 per thousand in 1916. The average for counties gives industrial Down with 83 deaths per thousand, and agricultural Roscommon with 35 only.

Now, this difference between the mortality in the urban and rural districts is not altogether due to conditions inseparable from town life. Irish cities are not the huge centres familiar to English and Scottish social workers. The population of Dublin in 1911 was 304,000, and of Belfast, 363,000. No wonder Bernard Shaw told us the other day that Belfasts would go six a penny in Birmingham or Manchester! Even the worst slum areas are within easy reach of fresh air. Here, for instance, is a typical Dublin slum, described in the Report of the Departmental Committee of Enquiry into Housing Conditions in 1914. It is a lane running between two respectable streets. The houses are erected in a narrow area, almost surrounded by high buildings or walls, with alleys, in some cases, not more than nine or ten feet wide. These houses have, as a rule, no separate closet accommodation, but one or two closets are situated somewhere in the vicinity, and are common to the occupants of the cottages or anyone who likes to use them. The water-tap, placed close to the closets, is also common. Generally speaking, the house consists of a kitchen and one small room; the roofs are old and defective and the whole house in bad repair. These are houses of the third class, described by the sanitary staff as "unfit for human habitation." There are sixty-three tenement-houses in this lane, with a public-house at the corner. Three courts open off it with cottage houses of the type described in the Report, only in worse repair. ——— Court contains four houses; annual valuation, £2. There is a common yard, with the sanitary accommodation of the kind described above, and the water-tap

But ten minutes from here is Stephen's Green Park, with grass, and flower-beds, and fresh air. A penny tram, were such wild extravagance possible to the dwellers in ——— Court, would bring a child from the cottages to the Strand—stretches of glorious sandy shore, with the wind blowing fresh and strong from the open sea. Even the streets into which ——— Court opens are wide and airy, and for every baby that dies in these homes of respectability, five die in the Court. Nor is the high death-rate due to unhealthy stock. Given decent conditions, the Dublin working-class would be healthy enough. The figures of the Registrar-General with regard to tuberculosis show a death-rate for domestic servants, who are principally recruited from the working-classes, more nearly approaching the death-rate for the professional and independent classes, below that of the middle classes, and considerably lower than the death-rate in the artisan and general service class. It is small wonder that the 1914 Commissioners record their opinion that until the housing problem is dealt with no substantial reduction of the death-rate can be hoped for.

It must be remembered that these conditions also affect the pre-natal mortality, which averages 60 per cent. of the whole. The Dublin girl grows up in a two-roomed cottage in the Court, or in a one-room tenement, and marries young. The standard of living is deplorably low. When the earnest woman sent over here to carry on a Food Economy campaign urged the Irish girls to eat less, one could only wonder if the speaker had any glimmer of knowledge as to the average dietary of the Irish working girl. A pinch of tea in a mug, stood on the workroom stove to stew, a slice of bread and margarine, this serves for dinner, as for breakfast and for tea. Supper is an unknown meal.

A curious by-product of war conditions is a change in the Dublin standard of feeding. Tea is so dear and so difficult to obtain that women who a year ago would touch nothing else are now occasionally induced to boil a bone and potatoes for dinner, and the communal kitchens are supplying soup and pudding to those girls whose work lies near one of these most excellent institutions. But tea and bread have been, and are the staple food of the Dublin working woman, whose wages are seldom above ten shillings a week, and often average five shillings. The infant is breast-fed, otherwise the death-rate would be far higher, but the crowded insanitary dwelling and the low physical condition of the mother account for the pre-natal mortality. For the ex-baby, things are even worse.

The problem in Belfast is slightly different. It is a new city of shoddy artisan dwellings instead of the tenement houses and cottages of the Dublin slums. The people have been attracted into the city by what seem to them good wages, and have been used to good country living. This is one reason why the Belfast girl, who happens to come to Dublin, earns more than the others at the same rates of pay. The Belfast figures of 113 infant deaths per thousand are no credit to the city, if these facts are borne in mind. They may be partly accounted for by the greater demand for women's work, so that the babies are put under a neighbour's care and bottle-fed, while the mother goes into the mill. The marked decrease in 1916, when the figures dropped from 137 per thousand to 113, can readily be accounted for. Though these were years of mounting prices and short half-time in the mills, the death-rate fell. The reason can be traced in the large number of separation allowances. The soldiers' wives were popularly supposed to spend their money in drink or grand pianos, but as a matter of fact in far the larger number of cases the woman stayed at home and minded the children.

One aspect of the matter must not be overlooked. It is a well-known fact that infant mortality is twice as high among illegitimate children as among those of the married mother. The illegitimacy rate in Ireland is very low, the highest figure being that of Ulster, where the illegitimacy birth-rate is 3.9 of the whole, and the lowest being Connaught, with a rate of 0.7. The treatment of unmarried mothers is far less generous than in England. To quote from an article of mine: "The entire responsibility of the child falls on the mother. Any action against the father must be taken, not by the girl herself, but by her father, mother, or employer. Otherwise she has no redress. If she goes into a workhouse with her child, the Guardians may choose to sue the father, but this right ceases if the child be taken out of the workhouse, as the order is granted for the relief of the rates. Further, the action can only be brought at the Quarter Sessions." If the order be disobeyed, nothing can be done till the next Sessions, when the penalty will probably be a fortnight in prison, or possibly only a week.

These facts partly account for the large number of unmarried mothers and children in the workhouses, and also have a bearing on the question of infant mortality. The girl who dreads the workhouse stigma for her child—"They'll cast it up against the crather for all time, if I leave her here"—puts the baby out to nurse, and goes to service to make up enough to pay the expense, since help from the father there is none. With respect to these nursed-out children, amendment of the Children's Act is required. The forty-eight hours' interval between placing an infant out to nurse and the notification to the inspector, is too long. Provision should also be made for the cost of *post-mortem* examination at present met by the coroner himself, with the natural result that such examinations are too few in number, and the cause of death, often due to neglect on the part of the woman in charge, is stated inaccurately.

Finally, as a detail, but one of importance, the death-rate among infants in workhouses is far too high. Efforts have been made more than once to obtain an enquiry into this serious condition, but in vain. It must remain as matter into which the new voters may well enquire.

In addition to these facts, it should be noted, the birth-rate has decreased steadily. In 1916 it was the lowest on record, but the decrease was continuous even before the war. This may have been partially caused by the emigration of the younger women, which was so marked and so disquieting a feature of the emigration returns during the years from 1906 to 1914.

Again, remember how small is the scale of the problem. It would not be difficult to save these Irish children, if people only cared to think about the matter. As it is, politicians still argue in Trinity College as to the future government of Ireland, voluntary organisations with scanty help from municipal authorities struggle with the ever-increasing sickness among the half-starved slum-dwellers, and leader-writers discourse in the Press on the need of safeguarding the child-life of the nation. The children's festival is just over. Will the men who control these things give us peace at home, so that we women may begin to bring joy into the hearts of the mothers and to save the little children whom we need so sorely on earth?

Dora Mellone.

The Representation of the People Bill in the House of Lords.

SOME IMPRESSIONS OF THE DEBATE (*continued*).

The third day of the debate on the second reading of the Reform Bill in the House of Lords differed somewhat from the two preceding days. The atmosphere of the century before last was rudely dispelled at the outset by a magnificent speech from Lord Buckmaster, whose clear and reasoned eloquence was backed by a wide knowledge of the realities of the present situation. The Bill, he maintained, was an urgent necessity. The country stood faced with the greatest problems of its history; the old order was changing, and in the new order that must come the people of the country must have their part. Answering the arguments of Lord Bryce he showed, with a wealth of illustration, the wide extent of the popular demand for Women's Suffrage, and warned their lordships that if they resisted the demands of women it would be at the cost of dissatisfaction and resentment among a very large and very valuable section of the community.

Lord Lytton, who followed, kept the academic shades at bay. His speech, which was marked with sincerity and with conviction, put forward an unanswerable argument. The Bill, he said, was only inopportune in that it was already so long delayed. Lord Bryce had said that Russia was the only great European country where women voted, and Russia was in anarchy; but did anyone suppose that events in Russia would have been as they are to-day had a real Reform Bill been introduced in time? He urged their lordships to realise that it was only by legislation that took account of the feelings and wishes of the people that revolution and disaster could be avoided. The system of government in force in this country was representative government, and that did not mean government by some over others, but government by people of themselves. The Parliament of the day might be scrupulously considerate of the interests of all the community, but it would only be said to represent those who elected it. Before 1832 the working men may have been well legislated for by Parliament, but they were not represented; before 1887 the agricultural labourer may have been carefully cared for, but he was not represented; and until this day women may have been cherished and protected, but they were not represented. The very title of this Bill was a justification of the inclusion of women in it. It was not a Bill for the wise government of the people, but a Bill for the Representation of the People, and as such he hoped it would pass into law.

Lord Stuart of Wortley, who was a member of the Speaker's Conference, made a speech of practical weight, setting forth the value of the settlement by compromise arrived at by the Conference; and it was not until Lord Curzon rose to close the debate on behalf of the Government that any of the characteristic features of the House were apparent.

Lord Curzon, whose style of elaborate oratory reached a high degree of perfection, defended the Bill in great detail from the attacks made upon it. He showed how the necessity for its introduction had arisen, and followed point by point the argument that leads the open-minded to the position of the Woman Suffragist. The people, he said, were asking for a larger share of their place in the sun. The country was faced with a gigantic task of social reconstruction, and it was a definite war measure to prepare for it. While the atmosphere of party controversy was dimmed, and while the war was still in progress, the opportunity for a settlement of franchise reform was unique. When once the war was over, it would be impossible to accomplish it. Did they contemplate spending the first three years of peace in an embittered controversy over franchise? No! They would have the problems themselves to settle: housing, education, the relation of men's and women's labour, all the great social questions. And would these wait while they wrangled over electoral law? The noble Earl drew from these very just arguments the strange conclusion that 2,000,000 more men were to be enfranchised now, and women were to be held over for the dim and distant future, when reconstruction is over and the problems solved. He did not speak of Women's Suffrage in detail, contenting himself with saying that he was still opposed to it, and would express his views on another occasion.

Even Lord Curzon, however, did not entirely re-establish the hoary antiquity of the previous debates; at one moment he begged their lordships to remember that they were not living, speaking, and acting in August, 1914, but in December, 1917, and perhaps in the time that still intervenes before the Committee stage he may himself notice and be swayed by this fact.

For the moment, the Bill is at rest. It passed its second reading without a division, and awaits in the Christmas emptiness of "their Lordships' House" the final tussle that is to show, as Lord Buckmaster said, whether or not peace is to be declared between that House and the democracy in the long drawn battle for reform.

A NEW EDUCATION BILL.

The Education Bill in its present form is to be dropped, and another simpler measure is to be introduced under the Ten Minutes' Rule, which will embody substantially the reforms contained in its predecessor, but will omit several controversial clauses, with regard to which Local Authorities found themselves unable to come to an agreement. Mr. Fisher became convinced that amendment would not greatly facilitate the passage of these clauses, and would waste a good deal of time. The new Bill is, we understand, to be taken as early as possible after Christmas, and has a good chance of reaching the Statute-book without any great delay.

"WOMEN MORE SOBER."

Under this heading a report was published last week in the daily Press of a paper read by Lord D'Abernon, Chairman of the Central Board, at the Institute of Public Health, on "Public Health and Alcoholism among Women."

Seeing that women have always been the more sober sex, it seems strange that they should have been singled out for special enquiry into their drinking habits, and Lord D'Abernon's figures prove the contention which has been often made in THE COMMON CAUSE, that no case can be made out for the special restrictive measures for women that have been advocated by some people, and actually put into practice in some places. He shows that, far from increasing among women during the last two years, drunkenness has steadily decreased.

Generally speaking, drunkenness has tended to increase as wages rose. The opposite has been true in the case of women, who are now handling independently much larger sums of money than ever before. There was a slight rise in the number of convictions during the early days of the war, due probably to the excitement caused by new conditions. But this dropped a little in 1915, and fell rapidly in 1916 and 1917, until it now stands at 188 a week as compared with 700 in 1914. Thus, with an increase of one and a-half millions of women employed in industry, and an increase of £150,000,000 to £200,000,000 in the wage earnings of women—in addition to the large sums they are receiving from the State as separation allowances—there has been a decline in female drunkenness as compared with pre-war figures. Occupation, steady wages, and an independent, self-supporting career had, said Lord D'Abernon, increased the self-control of women, and had proved profoundly beneficial to the community.

NEWS FROM HOLLAND.

At last the final stage has been reached, and on December 12th we witnessed the proclamation of the new Constitution, which brings us an electoral reform with proportional representation, manhood suffrage, compulsory voting; but for women only eligibility.

The Mayors reading the proclamation in great official state to the assembled people were greeted by the applause of all democrats in the nation, as if they announced the triumph of true democracy. But the women—the governed, not governing half of the people—have not refrained from uttering their dissatisfaction. All the leading newspapers, with only two exceptions, contained letters from women who protested against the tyranny of taxation and legislation without representation, pointing out that now men are obliged by the law not to hide their light under the corn-measure, whereas all the light the women might give remains deliberately shut up, the legal rule of one sex over both sexes is continued, and the resources of the country to traverse the present crisis are left in the hands of the men only.

No doubt the nation cannot fail to see the inconsistency of recognising the right of women to sit in Parliament and denying them a vote. It is for the Government that will come into power by next year's proportional election to remedy this mistake, since the new Constitution admits the introduction of Woman Suffrage. Already three of the seven parties represented in the States-General are trying to nominate women for Parliament, and we may hope soon to see the Netherlands join the Suffrage States of the world. MARTINA G. KRAMERS.

Our Girls in FRANCE urgently need your help.

As soon as sufficient subscriptions are received, preparations will be made for the building and equipment of another Hut, to be known as the **"COMMON CAUSE" HUT No. 3.**

When the brave girls of the Women's Auxiliary Army arrive in France, the happiest welcome they can have is at a Y.W.C.A. Hut, where they can get rest and refreshment and the companionship of their own countrywomen.

A "Common Cause" HUT for FRANCE.

The Young Women's Christian Association have asked the Editor of "The Common Cause" to provide another of these Huts, to be paid for and supported entirely by readers of this Journal, and to be called "The Common Cause" Hut.

Please send your donation NOW.

Y.W.C.A

The total amount asked for is £900, which is made up as follows:—
£500 TO PROVIDE THE HUT.
£200 TO EQUIP IT.
£200 TO MAINTAIN IT FOR 1 YEAR.
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I enclose my "bit" towards "The Common Cause" Hut for our Girls in France, viz.: _____

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An Example from Medical Women.

The Representation of the People Bill has been read a second time in the House of Lords, and another stage of its progress is thus completed. The very small number of people who still oppose Women's Suffrage have not given up the struggle, but their protests have daily more and more of the ring of despair, and they meet with less and less sympathy, as is shown by the fate of Mrs. Humphry Ward's letter to *The Times* last week. It seems evident that the most the Anti-Suffragists can now hope for is to cause some slight delay in the final triumph of the Representation of the People Bill; we are not sure that they will succeed even in that. Whatever they do, it now seems practically certain that women will have votes early in the coming year, and that our country will have made a fresh step in democratic progress.

This ought to be a consoling thought to us during one of the saddest Christmas seasons that there has ever been. For the gain to humanity will be something real and definite; something that, after a generation or two, no sane person will be able to deny. We *know* this, and if we are ever tempted to forget it, reminders are constantly at hand. One has been before us lately, for we have all been thinking of the great work of medical women exemplified in the lives of two who have lately left us—Doctor Elsie Inglis, and Mrs. Garrett Anderson. Very few people would now be inclined to deny that it is a solid gain to humanity that women are trained to be doctors as well as men. The work of women doctors has been an asset to the countries that have produced them and to their Allies in this war, and it is one of the agencies that has helped to diminish the appalling load of suffering under which humanity is bowed down.

Everybody acknowledges this now, but how difficult it must have been to look forward to such a gain half a century ago. The pioneers, Elizabeth Blackwell, Elizabeth Garrett, Sophia Jex Blake, and those who immediately followed them, looked forward and decided that it was worth while not only to "shun delights and live laborious days," but also to endure bitter opposition and hatred for the sake of the hope to humanity; but to many ordinary men and women their struggle seemed wrong-headed madness. It is a little more than fifty years since the medical schools of Great Britain refused to admit Elizabeth Garrett. She obtained the licence of the Society of Apothecaries, who were unable by their constitution to exclude any person who had satisfied the ordinary tests. But her admission was a kind of accident; the Society immediately took steps to get the law altered, so as to prevent any other women from following her. In those days it was quite seriously argued that a woman could not study the science of anatomy or know of the existence of certain diseases without losing her womanly qualities; it was also asserted that no woman could stand the strain of medical work without breaking down. It must have seemed to many people impossible that the unsexed, nerve-shattered females who did by a miracle survive a medical education, could possibly be any good to others or lead useful human lives themselves. Now, Mrs. Garrett Anderson has died full of years and honours, and few would be found to deny that she has had a useful, successful, and indeed a glorious life. In his address at the Memorial Service for her last Saturday, the Bishop of Stepney dwelt not only on the greatness of her victory, but on the rapidity of her achievement. She herself lived to see the later stages of the battle which she had begun. The great usefulness of women doctors in treating their own sex had been realised by the majority long before she ceased to practise, and large numbers of the healed bore witness to it. But it is only about seven years since the Manchester Infirmary refused to appoint a resident woman doctor, and gave as one of its principal

reasons that women doctors could not, and ought not, to treat men patients. At the beginning of the present war, it was still asserted by many that it would be intolerable and impossible for soldiers to be attended by women surgeons. Mrs. Garrett Anderson lived to see her daughter at the head of a great military hospital staffed entirely by women, and honoured for her work as a surgeon and for her distinguished service to the State. At the same time our beloved Doctor Inglis was showing what women doctors could do for the people on whom the desolation of war had fallen with the most overwhelming force. If we want to know whether the existence of women doctors has done good and diminished the sum of human misery, we have only to ask her Serbian patients. But we have no need to ask, for everybody now acknowledges the solid gain that was achieved when the pioneer medical women broke down the barriers that prevented them from serving their fellows.

Such another breaking down of barriers is about to take place. In fifty years it will seem as absurd that women should ever have been excluded from political service, as it now seems that they should have been excluded from the study of medicine, and humanity will have made another great gain. It is something to look forward to in the present time of distress, and thinking of it, we can face the future with a surer faith.

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR MRS. GARRETT ANDERSON.

A Memorial Service for Mrs. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, M.D., was held at Christ Church, the church of the Military Hospital, Endell Street, on Saturday, December 22nd. The Bishop of Stepney gave an address, in which he spoke of the great work of medical women, and their swift triumph over the forces of reaction. He paid a tribute to the work of the pioneers, and especially to Mrs. Garrett Anderson herself, whose energy and fortitude had done so much to break down barriers and to increase the opportunities of service for women. Among those present at the service were :—

Sir Alan and Lady Anderson, Sir Kenneth and Lady Anderson, Mrs. Fawcett, Miss Garrett and Mr. Roland Garrett, Miss Adelaide Anderson and Miss Mary Anderson, Mr. Ian Anderson and the Misses Anderson, Dr. Ford Anderson, Mrs. and Miss Anderson, Miss J. Anderson and Miss R. Anderson, Miss C. Anderson, Miss Garrett, Mr. G. D. Garrett, Dr. Garrett, Mrs. Garrett Jones, Mrs. Garrett Smith, Mr. I. C. Geddes, Viscountess Cowdray, Mrs. Kinnell, Lady Evans, Somerville College, Oxford, Lady Gibb, Dr. Margaret Phillips, Mrs. Rhys Powell, Miss Allen, Vice-mistress, Girton College, Lady Barrett, M.D., Dr. Caroline Skeel, Westfield College, Mrs. Augustus Thorne, Lady Busk, Mrs. Cecil Chapman, Dr. Brown, Mrs. and Miss Fletcher, Dr. Martindale, Mrs. G. E. M. Cowell, Lady Hall, Dr. L. Hamilton, Dr. Douie, Mrs. and Miss Bastard, Lady Joyce, Dr. Margaret Fraser, Mrs. Shann (representing Lady Flower), Mrs. J. Boyd-Carpenter, Mrs. W. Scoresby Routledge, Mrs. W. S. Colman (Chairman, House Committee, New Hospital for Women), Mrs. Charles Mackintosh, Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Dryhurst, Dr. Helen Boyle, Dr. Agnes Henderson, Dr. Emily Macredy, Miss Nina Boyle, Miss Knight, M.D. (Treasurer of the Women's Freedom League), Dr. Huxley, Miss Leveson, Dr. Wilks, Mrs. Burleigh Leach (representing the Chief Controller, W.A.A.C.), Mrs. Andrews (Controller of Recruiting, W.A.A.C.), Mrs. and Miss Ridpath, Mrs. Wilfred Davies, Dr. Eaton, Dr. Florence Stoney, Miss Chadburn, Miss Ritchie, Professor and Mrs. Waller, Mrs. Davies Colley, Mrs. Pratt, Miss Imogen Murphy, Mrs. Lauder Eaton, Miss F. C. Johnson, Miss Macdonald, Dr. Sainsbury, Mrs. Bethell, Mrs. Dickinson, Mrs. Hartley, Miss Holland, Dr. Gordon, Mrs. Wall, Mr. and Mrs. Bovet, Miss Raisin, Miss Edgell, Miss Rawlings, Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Duncan, Dr. E. Slater, Dr. Michael Beverley, Mr. Guy Elliston (Secretary, British Medical Association), Mr. Stephen Paget (representing the Research Defence Society), Colonel Wm. R. Smith (Royal Institute of Public Health), Mr. Alfred Layton (Chairman, Royal Free Hospital), Dr. Walter Carr (Royal Free Hospital), Mr. James Berry, Colonel Atwood Thorn, the Rev. Gerald Thompson, and Mr. C. W. Theis (Royal Westminster Ophthalmic Hospital).

The associations and hospitals represented included :—

London School of Medicine for Women, British Medical Association, Medical Women's Federation, New Hospital for Women, Clapham Maternity Hospital, Women's Hospital for Children, South London Hospital, Royal Free Hospital, Scottish Women's Hospital, National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, London Graduates' Union, Freedom League, New Constitutional Society, Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association, Girton, Newnham, Somerville, Bedford, Westfield, and Holloway Colleges, Students' Union of the London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine, St. Mary's Hospital Women Students, and the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. A number of students from the London School of Medicine were in academic dress.

WOMEN WANTED FOR DRAUGHTSMANSHIP.

There is still an urgent demand for women to train for tracing and junior draughtsmanship in munition and engineering works and Government departments. The work is much needed, and is of national importance. Particulars about training may be obtained from the Training Department, Women's Service, 58, Victoria Street, S.W. 1.

The Save or Starve Campaign.

A great number of voluntary workers and speakers are wanted to help in the "S.O.S." Campaign that is to be carried on during the first week in January.

The signal "S.O.S." at sea tells that a ship is in distress. The Save or Starve campaign, during which Sir Arthur Yapp will make a final effort to avoid the necessity for compulsory rationing, is intended to bring home to everyone throughout the length and breadth of the land the fact that we shall all be in distress through starvation unless each does his or her share in saving our food supply.

In London there will be meetings both indoors and out, and clergymen and ministers of all denominations have been asked to help by sermons. Many of the big and small leagues and societies, theatres, cinemas, hotels, and shops have already promised to help. The chief points that the speakers will urge are the shortage of the world harvests and the restricted amount of tonnage for conveying food from abroad to us and the Allies.

A special appeal is to be made to women on the ground that economy in foodstuffs depends chiefly upon them, and they are to be urged to allow no waste of any description in bread, meat, sugar, and fats of all kinds.

But what of the waste of women's time and strength in obtaining necessary articles of food under our present faulty system of distribution? Women would be able to give much more valuable help in conserving our food supply, and would work at the problem with greater heart, if a larger number were appointed to serve on local food committees, and were able to give their point of view about methods of sale and supply. It is to be hoped that the campaign will be partly directed towards pointing out the need for better representation of women on the committees, and that steps will be taken to enable housewives to give their assistance to these bodies, which have now, under Lord Rhondda's new Order, been given very large powers for controlling the distribution and consumption of any article of food in their own areas.

Already many local Committees are making experiments of their own. We mentioned last week (on page 467) the schemes that are being started by Chesterfield, Sheffield, and Liverpool. The Chesterfield scheme is having the loyal support of retail grocers and provision traders, who have pledged themselves to do their utmost to promote its success. The ration of butter or margarine (not both) will be 4 oz. per head per week, and the ration of tea 1 oz.

The whole of the 300,000 householders' rationing cards have now been distributed in Birmingham. Although the scheme does not come into force until January 1st, the retailers are being asked to make a voluntary effort to put the supply of tea, butter, and margarine on the rationing basis this week. Supplies of butter are scarce, but householders may obtain 2 oz. of butter and 2 oz. of margarine, if both are available.

During "S.O.S." many new plans will doubtless be discussed, and an impetus will be given to local committees that have not hitherto taken their duties sufficiently seriously.

Offers of help for the week of all kinds should be addressed to Miss C. May Beeman, 10, West Bolton Gardens, S.W. 5. Posters, handbills, enrolment cards, and ration leaflets may be obtained from the same address.

Correspondence.

NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE.

Madam,—I am glad that my colleague, Miss Macarthur, has so ably defended Clause 22 in the new Insurance Bill, as this solution of the impasse created by the Davidson Judgment has been arrived at largely by her labours on the Ryan and other committees, no one is in a better position to do so than herself

My objection to the proposal is not that I think it unjust, but that it fails to carry out the purpose of the principal Act, which not only intended to provide certain payments in sickness, but its scope included the *prevention and cure of sickness*. In this connection the provision of maternity benefit was of great importance, and it is not too much to say that nothing recommended the scheme to the public so much as the promises held out in this direction; the justification for making contributions from employers and employed compulsory was the high purpose to be served.

The new Bill, however, dissipates certain of these moneys—to the estimated extent of £400,000 per annum—as a "marriage benefit" in the form of surrender value to such women as choose this payment. I suggest this new benefit can hardly be defended as contributing to the prevention and cure of sickness.

It is important for the convenience of society administration to secure early notification of marriage; this surrender value will be widely advertised, and there is little doubt that the average working-class woman who is not an expert on insurance will choose the £2 without realising that

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she had surrendered something of greater value, viz., a year's full benefit, including maternity benefit in the event of confinement during the first year of marriage. This full insurance, if need had arisen, would have included pregnancy sickness benefit for which a special grant has been made by Parliament. She will, however, have "contracted out" of the Act for a cash payment of £2, and if she returns to work she must requalify and pay forty-two weekly contributions before she is again entitled to maternity benefit. There are alternatives to the "marriage benefit," but I doubt whether these will ever be explained properly to the majority of insured women.

I think it is lamentable that a point so controversial should have received so little attention from women in the country who profess to be interested in legislation especially affecting women. The fact that Clause 22 has been passed through the House of Commons without comment or debate must produce the impression that no vital interest has been aroused on a question of first importance to working-class women.

If this correspondence calls attention to the necessity for more intelligent interest in such measures it will have served a useful purpose.

By the way, my previous letter was a personal opinion, and was not intended to express the views of the societies the names of which you inserted at the head.

MARGARET E. BONDFIELD.

SEPARATION ALLOWANCES FOR SOLDIERS' BRIDES.

MADAM,—So much is now being said and done for the welfare of our babies and to try and lessen the infantile death rate, but one point I have not yet seen mentioned and that is respecting the separation allowance for the wives of our men preceding the birth of their children. The allowance, though ample for a woman without a child who can work to help herself, seems to me insufficient when the time comes when she cannot work and when she requires more care and nourishment, and also has the expense of providing clothing for the coming child, especially is this hard with the first child. Would it not be possible for the extra allowance that is paid as soon as the child is born to commence some months before the birth. I think this might help to ensure a better start for the child. Imposture could easily be prevented by a doctor's certificate being necessary before the extra allowance was paid.

A. PILLEY.

WAGES FOR WIVES *VERSUS* THE ENDOWMENT OF MOTHERHOOD.

MADAM,—Earned money is sweeter than a gift. Wages are more wisely spent than a dole. I am convinced that we should aim at wages for wives rather than at endowment of motherhood. The economic position of women, consequently of men, will remain unstable as long as women workers habitually fall out of the labour market on marriage. If women earners continued to earn after marriage, as part-time workers, and with proper maternity intervals, the gain to both the family and the community would be enormous.

It is impossible to do more, in the space of a letter, than to indicate some of the points of this many-sided problem. There could be larger, healthier families, because there would be more money to bring them up. There would be money enough to train daughters, as well as sons, into skilled, highly-paid workers. A wife with an incapacitated husband, a widow with children, would be well-equipped to earn for her family. At present re-entry into her "trade" is difficult and, when effected, will hardly bring her in even the meagre earnings of a young, unmarried woman, because she has grown rusty and out-of-date in her work. The community would gain a number of skilled, experienced workers. Large employers of labour would be encouraged to train on their promising young women for senior, well-paid posts, instead of keeping them at elementary, ill-paid work. Fathers would not feel that money sunk in giving a daughter a good profession was liable to be "thrown away" by her marriage.

Women doctors, actresses, authoresses at present work with success after marriage, because these occupations readily lend themselves to part-time work and because they are sufficiently well-paid to make part-time work worth while. Elementary school-mistresses and women day-labourers work after marriage with ill-success, because their work is, at present, whole-time and poorly-paid. They are overworked and their homes and children suffer.

Part-time wage earning would not involve neglect of "the sacred duties of a wife and mother," for much of a married woman's time is taken up in cooking and cleaning or in supervising her cooks and cleaners, duties in which there is nothing "sacred." Such duties might well be relegated to older or less able women, leaving wives with skilled trades free to augment family incomes and national efficiency.

MARY M. ADAMSON.

N.U.W.S.S. Literature Department.

[EVELYN HOUSE, 62, OXFORD STREET, W. 1.]

The Literature Department is selling the Scottish Women's Hospital Christmas Number, "The Thistle" (price 1s. 6d.; postage 2½d.). This makes a delightful gift for our men at the Front and elsewhere, and is an Annual full of interest. Some of the contributors are Cutliffe Hyne, W. Pett Ridge, Marie Corelli, H. de Vere Stacpoole, J. J. Bell, W. W. Gibson, Mary Stuart Boyd, and Sir Owen Seaman, while Mr. John Lavery, W. T. Cameron, George Henry, and numerous other artists, help to make "The Thistle" more interesting.

THE TRAINING OF VOLUNTARY SOCIAL WORKERS.

Readers who remember Miss Elizabeth Macadam's valuable article on "Training for National Service" will be interested to learn that arrangements have been made by the London School of Economics (Clare Market, Portugal Street, W.C. 2) for part-time courses of training for social workers. As a result of the article in THE COMMON CAUSE several good students presented themselves in the summer, and the promoters of the scheme of training have been greatly encouraged by the extent of the demand for systematic instruction in social questions that they have found. Between forty and fifty women, many of them experienced social workers, are taking the course of study arranged for this session, and a great many others have a wish to train when the war is over.

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N.U.W.S.S. Scottish Women's Hospitals.

Subscriptions are still urgently needed, and should be sent to Mrs. Laurie, Hon. Treasurer, S.W.H., Red House, Greenock. Cheques to be crossed "Royal Bank of Scotland." Subscriptions for the London Units to be sent the Right Hon. Viscountess Cowdray, or the Hon. Mrs. B. M. Graves, Hon. Treasurers, 66, Victoria Street, Westminster, London, S.W. 1.

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Forward as per list to December 6th, 1917	257,150	11	11
Further donations received to December 13th, 1917:—			
War Council, American Red Cross in Washington, per E. H. Wells, Esq. ($50,000)	10,463	10	3
*Heathfield and District W.S.S. and Friends, collected by Mrs. Ogden Leosch: Mrs. Ogden Leosch (£2 5s.), Mrs. Logie Pirie (£1 10s.), Mrs. Rankin, Pres. (10s. 6d.), Mrs. Browning (10s. 6d.), Mrs. Cunliffe, Hon. Sec. (10s.), Mrs. Scott (10s.), Fred Ogden Leosch, Esq. (10s.), Mrs. Godbold (2s.), Miss Taylor, Hon. Treas. (2s.)	6	10	0
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*Perth W.S.S., per Miss E. W. R. Alison, Hon. Treas., to continue "Perth" bed, Royaumont	51	15	6
*Per Miss Isabelle Kerr, Local Hon. Sec. S.W.H., Greenock: 17th instal. from Waste-paper and Waste Material Scheme in Greenock	100	0	0
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*Part of Weekly Collection made by Masters and Boys of Glasgow Academy, per E. Temple, Esq., Headmaster ...	1	16	3
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American Friends, per E. C. W.	10	0	0
*From Members of the Hope Family, for the continued upkeep of the two "Hope" beds, Royaumont and Salonica	50	0	0
*Messrs. Jas. C. Barr Ltd., per J. Reid, Esq.	1	0	0
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The Misses Nelson, to continue "Heriot Row" bed, Corsica	1	0	0
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What Some of our Societies are Doing.

The Ascot Suffrage Society held its fourth Annual Sale on December 5th, which realised about £230 for the Scottish Women's Hospital. It was specially interesting as being the first large gathering held by the Society since the favourable reception of the New Reform Bill. H.R.H. Princess Alice generously declared the sale open, the Vicars of Ascot and South Ascot were on the platform, the Ranee of Sarawak arranged the music, Countess Roberts and Lady Edwina Hewin held a stall for the sale of work made at the auxiliary hospital; there was a crowded attendance of "rank and fashion" as well as tradespeople and villagers, and "all went merry as a village bell." The Misses Forrester and Miss V. Hanbury, officers of the Society, may be singled out for special mention, as indefatigable workers during long weeks of preparation. Miss Fay Davis, who came from London to "recite," is the founder of the "third Ascot (Fay Davis) bed at Royaumont."

The Hon. Mrs. Spencer Graves wishes to thank all those who were so kind as to help in her sale of lavender and useful objects for the benefit of the London Society for Women's Suffrage. Friends will be glad to hear that the sale realised £35.

Forthcoming Meetings (N.U.W.S.S.)

JANUARY 7.

Hampstead—Mothers' Union Meeting at St. Paul's Schools, Winchester Road, Fellows Road, N.W.—Speaker: Mrs. Morgans—Subject: "The Use of the Vote." 3 p.m.

Mrs. Thoday will speak on the future of the National Union, at Silverdale, January 2nd; Carnforth, January 3rd; Keswick, January 4th.

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